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CARDIN STATEMENT ON ISRAEL-LEBANON BORDER VIOLENCE

"Israel cannot tolerate unprovoked attacks upon its soldiers."

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD), a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, released the following statement today in response to the reported violence along the Israel-Lebanese border:

"I am saddened by yesterday's violence on the Israel-Lebanon border, the most serious confrontation in four years. The United Nations forces on the ground have confirmed that Israel did nothing wrong and that Lebanese forces were responsible for this spark in violence. The Lebanese Army was completely unprompted when it fired upon Israeli forces, unfortunately killing one Israeli commander and seriously injuring another.

"Israel has the right to defend its borders against all security threats and cannot tolerate unprovoked attacks upon its soldiers. Israel has repeatedly expressed its concern over the ongoing flow of weapons into Lebanon, in violation of UN Security Council resolutions, and has warned that the continued weapons buildup could threaten the calm that Israel has fostered since 2006. Yet, Iran and Syria continue to enable Hezbollah to build up weapons along the border.

"Israel is America's closest and most reliable ally in the Middle East and one of our closest partners in the fight against extremism and terrorism. I deplore the needless loss of life that has occurred and call upon Israel's neighbors to take effective measures to prevent further such episodes."

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